

REMARKS

This application is a continuation-in-part application of US application serial number 10/344,464. This amendment is being presented to incorporate the same changes made to the specification of the parent application to comply to the changes made to the international application, and also to introduce material that the Examiner alleged was new matter in prosecution of the parent application. This preliminary amendment is being submitted contemporaneously with the corresponding application, and is referenced on the attached unsigned Declaration and Power of Attorney document. Under MPEP 608.04(b) it is respectfully submitted that this material is part of the original disclosure of this application and thus cannot constitute new matter.

Also, in this amendment, changes have been made to comply with the Examiner's requirements from the Office Action issued in the parent application. Specifically, as this is a continuation-in-part application, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejections under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, regarding new matter, are not valid against this application.

Further, the rejections made by the Examiner under 35 USC §112, second paragraph are also believed to have been addressed herein. Specifically, the parenthetical expressions from claim 1 have been removed. Also, the phrases "for example" and "such as" have been removed from the claims.

The Examiners claim objections have also been addressed herein. Specifically, the spelling errors noted by the Examiner have been corrected, as has the occurrence in claim 35 of the expression "C<sub>i</sub>" instead of the correct "C<sub>1</sub>". Also, claims 34 and 35 now properly recite "low molecular weight alcohols".

The Examiner additionally objected to paragraph 3 of page 6 of the application which contained spelling errors. These errors have also been corrected herein. Therefore, it is believed that all of the formal errors noted by the Examiner in the parent application have been addressed herein.

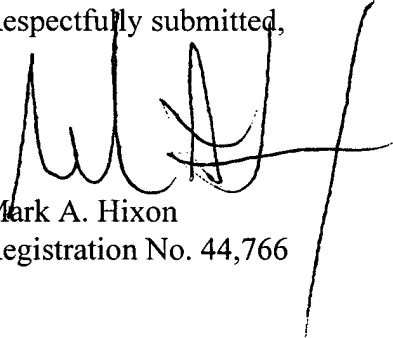
It is important to note that a significant feature of the present invention is the addition in several stages, as is noted in new claim 28, as this novel feature enables a much higher depletion of the additives than was previously known in the art. (Please note that the terms non-aqueous solvent II and precipitating agents are used synonymously). This addition in several stages is not only limited to example 3, but refers to all embodiments of the inventive method.

For support for these amendments in the original disclosure, please note that originally filed claim 6 indicates that the target polymer dissolved in solvent I is first mixed with solvent III and then water is added. This shows the addition of the precipitating agent in multiple stages. Further, Example 6 indicates 2 additional examples showing the addition of precipitating agent in multiple stages. In the first alternative of this example, the system consists of n-hexane and water, and the second alternative consists of n-hexane and a solution of ethanol and water.

Applicants believe the addition of the precipitating agent in multiple stages distinguishes the present invention from known processes. It is believed that the claims of the present invention are in condition for allowance.

Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mark A. Hixon', written over a horizontal line.

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